

Field Manual
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Risk Management

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Preface

FM 100-14 applies across the wide range of Army operations. It explains the principles, procedures, and responsibilities to successfully apply the *risk management process* to conserve combat power and resources. The manual applies to both Army and civilian personnel during all Army activities, including joint, multinational, and interagency environments.

The manual is intended to help commanders,¹ their staffs, leaders,² and managers develop a framework to make risk management a routine part of planning, preparing, and executing operational missions and everyday tasks. This framework will allow soldiers to operate with maximum initiative, flexibility, and adaptability. Although the manual's prime focus is the operational Army, the principles of risk management apply to all Army activities.

Army operations—especially combat operations—are demanding and complex. They are inherently dangerous, including tough, realistic training. Managing risks related to such operations requires educated judgment and professional competence. The risk management process allows individuals to make informed, conscious decisions to accept risks at acceptable levels.

This manual is not a substitute for thought. Simply reading it will not make one adept in building protection around a mission.³ Soldiers should compare the doctrine herein against their own experience and think about why, when, and how it applies to their situation and area of responsibility. If the doctrine herein is to be useful, it must become second nature.

The proponent of this manual is HQ TRADOC. Send comments and recommendations on DA Form 2028 directly to Commander, US Army Training and Doctrine Command, ATTN: ATBO-SO, Fort Monroe, VA 23651-5000.

Unless this publication states otherwise, masculine nouns and pronouns do not refer exclusively to men.

¹ The term *commander* as used herein refers to personnel in a command position.

² The term *leader* as used herein refers to commanders, personnel in the chain of command (team, squad, section, platoon leader), and staff members having personnel supervisory responsibility.

³ The term *mission* as used herein includes mission, operation, or task.

Introduction

Risk management is not an add-on feature to the decision-making process but rather a fully integrated element of planning and executing operations... Risk management helps us preserve combat power and retain the flexibility for bold and decisive action. Proper risk management is a combat multiplier that we can ill afford to squander.

General Dennis J. Reimer
Chief of Staff, Army
27 July 1995

The Army's fundamental purpose is to fight and win the nation's wars. For this purpose, the country gives the Army critical resources, including those most valuable—its sons and daughters. The Army uses its resources to generate overwhelming combat power to fight and win quickly, decisively, and with minimal losses. The Army's inherent responsibility to the nation is to protect and preserve its resources—a responsibility that resides at all levels. Risk management is an effective process for preserving resources. It is not an event. It is both an art and a science. Soldiers use it to identify tactical and accident risks, which they reduce by avoiding, controlling, or eliminating hazards.

The Army introduced the risk management process into training, the operational environments, and materiel acquisition in the late 1980s. Risk management was originally perceived as solely a safety officer function. However, by the early 1990s, the Army established a goal to integrate risk management into all Army processes and activities and into every individual's behavior, both on and off duty. Since the process was introduced, the personal involvement of commanders in preventing accidents—and their aggressive use of the process—have become driving factors in the steady downward trend in Army accidental losses.

Leaders must understand the importance of the process in conserving combat power and resources. Risk management, like reconnaissance and security, is an ongoing process that continues from mission to mission. Within the mission, leaders must know when the process begins and who has responsibility. It must be integral to the military decision. The process is an important means to enhance situational awareness.

Risk decisions are commanders' business. Such decisions are normally based on the next higher commander's guidance on how much risk he is willing to accept and delegate for the mission. Risk decisions should be made at the lowest possible level, except in extreme circumstances. Training operations, including those at combat training centers (CTCs), may be of such intensity that risk decision are retained at a higher level.

Both leaders and staffs manage risk. Staff members continuously look for hazards associated with their areas of expertise. They then recommend controls to reduce risks. Hazards and the resulting risks may vary as circumstances change and experience is gained. Leaders and individual soldiers become the assessors for ever-changing hazards such as those associated with environment (weather; visibility; contaminated air, water, and soil), equipment readiness, individual and unit experience, and fatigue. Leaders should advise the chain of command on risks and risk reduction measures.